



## JAMES GILLESPIE'S HIGH SCHOOL

Interim Head teacher / Ceannard: Neil McCallum B.Ed (Hons), SQH

---

Address: 120 Warrender Park Road, Edinburgh EH9 1DD  
e-mail: [admin@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk](mailto:admin@jamesgillespies.edin.sch.uk)  
Website: [jamesgillespies.co.uk](http://jamesgillespies.co.uk)  
Telephone 0131 447 1900

JGHS Parent council  
1<sup>st</sup> February 2023

### Staffing Update

Mrs Siobhan Gilliland – Classroom assistant is retiring  
Mrs McGeary will be starting on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February.

#### **Support for Learning**

We have appointed 4 new PSAs, who have all taken up their positions now.

### School trips

The Council has taken a stepped return to overnight visits; beginning with a prompt restart of residential visits to the Council's centres and camping expeditions. Overseas visits have been reviewed alongside educational effectiveness, equity, equality, environmental sustainability as well as minimising financial risks to our families, partners and the Council. The latter is due to the Council, like other local authorities across Scotland, being unable to secure group COVID-19 pandemic cancellation insurance.

I am pleased to inform you that our review has finished and we will be shortly updating schools on the revised process for the planning and approval of appropriate overseas visits. This will ensure young people can attend suitable overseas visits, which are safe, accessible, and relevant to their educational needs whilst minimising financial risks to those involved.

We are currently looking at an Alternative Timetable option for May to be able to offer opportunities. This would include outdoor experiences for S2 and S3 pupils that have not been afforded these opportunities previously.

Range of trips are being offered and these will on occasion be limited in number that can attend.

### Prelims

This month, we have hosted the S5/6 for the duration of the prelim diet due to the lack of space on the main campus. The cohort has adapted well to their formal assessments, and we understand they have enjoyed using Darroch for this purpose. The use of Darroch has been particularly successful as

the many smaller spaces available have allowed for greater flexibility, ensuring pupils have been given the best possible chance to succeed in their prelims. This year's new assessment arrangements have also allowed there to be a significant reduction in disruption on the Main Campus, allowing Junior lessons to continue as normal.

### ***Industrial Action***

28<sup>th</sup> February / 1<sup>st</sup> March (all unions)

Communication sent out today, with a follow up to come from school on week beginning the 20<sup>th</sup> of February.

### ***Toilets***

Looking to review this and to have a pupil focus group on what we need to do to always make these more accessible to all young people. Discussions with the Senior pupil council and creating a short life working group with the pupils to look at how we can ensure that these facilities are provided in a manner to ensure that they are accessible to pupils and meet all necessary requirements and legislation. We will also be looking to other education establishments to see the processes they have in place to support their access to toilets.

### ***Vaping***

Relaunching the smoke free policy and want to ensure this is led by the pupils. All council buildings are non-smoking, this includes vaping.

Education and information shared with pupils

Information and access to appropriate resources to share with parents and carers to allow them to support their young person at home.

Issue of

### ***Homework Policy***

This was last reviewed in 2017, so the current policy needs review and for this purpose I would like to convene a short life working group to review this considering the changes in approaches that will now be in place post pandemic and with the empowered learning project having been rolled out. I will send a communication to all parents and carers in this week's Friday update to seek support in taking this forward.

### ***Communications***

We are relaunching the School App, information will be shared with all the school community prior to the February break, with the relaunch happening on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February.

We will also be establishing a short life working group with parents and carers to establish how we can work in partnership to ensure that the information is shared in the best manner possible. I will send a communication to all parents and carers in this week's Friday update to seek support in taking this This will allow us to look at items such as:

- Weekly HT update
- House Newsletter
- Year Specific newsletters
- Family Languages that communications are shared in

### ***Attainment***

Further to the presentation there have been requests for an update on the attainment levels in school. I will be happy to share this through a presentation at the next meeting in March.

***Upcoming Events***

Darach Campus open Evening  
End of Term  
All resume  
Battle of the Bands  
Mental Health Workshop

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February  
Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February  
Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February  
Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March